



## Promoting the System of Educational Quality Management in an Indonesian Madrasa

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### Abstrak

Meskipun telah diselidiki secara luas di bidang institusi pendidikan, manajemen mutu dengan penjaminan kualitas dalam lingkungan madrasah masih sedikit diperhatikan oleh para peneliti. Untuk mengisi kesenjangan ini, penelitian ini berupaya menampilkan desain dan implementasi manajemen mutu pendidikan yang dilakukan di sebuah madrasah negeri di Yogyakarta, Indonesia. Studi ini menyoroti penjaminan mutu madrasah dalam pembangunan karakter, manajemen pendidikan, proses belajar mengajar, dan manajemen sumber daya manusia di madrasah ini. Didesain dengan studi kasus kualitatif, wawancara mendalam dengan kepala madrasah dan kepala bagian kesiswaan serta observasi dilakukan untuk mendapatkan data. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa madrasah tersebut merancang tahapan-tahapan manajemen mutu, yaitu: perencanaan, pengorganisasian, mobilisasi, supervisi, pengembangan, dan evaluasi. Implementasi desain ini menggunakan sistem bottom-up, transparan, dan akuntabel, disertai dengan deskripsi pekerjaan yang jelas di setiap posisi sehingga memberikan layanan pendidikan yang optimal. Selain itu, penjaminan mutu juga ditekankan pada pembangunan karakter, audit internal dan eksternal, inovasi pembelajaran, dan pengembangan kualitas guru dan staf kependidikan. Studi ini juga mempromosikan bahwa madrasah ibtidaiyah negeri ini merancang konsep sekolah ramah anak yang bertujuan untuk menyediakan lingkungan belajar yang nyaman bagi semua anggota madrasah, khususnya para siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** Manajemen Mutu, Penjaminan Mutu Pendidikan, Madrasah Negeri

### Abstract

*Despite being widely investigated in the realm of educational institutions, quality management along with quality assurance in a madrasa setting receives scanty attention. To fill this gap, the present study attempts to showcase design and implementation of educational quality management performed in a public primary madrasa situated in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. It looks at quality assurance in character building, educational management, teaching and learning processes, and human*

*resources management in this madrasa. Grounded in a qualitative case study, in-depth interviews with the madrasa principal and head of student affairs as well as observation were carried out to garner data. The findings of the study demonstrated that the madrasa designed stages of quality management, namely: planning, organizing, mobilizing, supervising, developing, and evaluating. The implementation of this design used bottom-up, transparent, and accountable system, accompanied by a clear job description in each position so that it provided optimal education services. Additionally, the quality assurance coped with character building, internal and external audit, teaching and learning innovations, and quality development of the teacher and academic staffs. The study also promoted that this madrasa designed the concept of children-friendly school aiming to provide a comfortable learning environment for all the madrasa members.*

**Keywords:** *Quality Management, Educational Quality Assurance, Public Madrasa*

## INTRODUCTION

The educational improvement in Indonesia fostered through the quality assurance and enhancement of quality program denotes the responsibility of the entire unit of education. This should be supported by local provincial government and district/city government in accordance with their respective authority and the role of the community. It indicates that the government plays a pivotal role in escalating the quality improvement in the sector of education, including quality public education (Liu, 2018: 9). At the national level, it is conducted by the Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Ministry of Home Affairs, and other related agencies.

The implementation of educational quality assurance so far has been facing various problems. Moerdiyanto (2006: 6) points out that the issues involve that first, incomplete socialization of national educational standards has not been well-regarded as a reference for the quality of education yet. Second, the implementation of educational quality improvement and assurance is still bordered to monitoring the quality components in educational units. Third, quality mapping is still in the form of achievement data of educational quality that has not been integrated from a variety of educational authorities. Lastly, follow-up action for achievement data of educational quality has not been collaborated from the policy maker and practitioners of education at different levels. Therefore, it is worth mentioning that the implementation of a quality management and quality improvement program of an organization has several advantages. They are noticed in increasing the number of customer, stimulating

employee awareness regarding the quality, improving organizational performance, and achieving organizational effectiveness (Irianto, 2004: 86).

Those benefits are extremely useful for the educational world. Sukasni & Efendy (2017: 186) reported that in reality, Indonesia's educational level is still low and needs improvement as the foundation for an effective partnership among educational institutions. Consequently, it is highlighted by Damayanti (2005: 34) that management of good quality is the integration that focuses on product quality, consumers, and orientation on employees by providing an integral approach with organizational issues. It implies that today, Indonesia's education is considered to have low rank because of the inadequate educational management. Furthermore, the sense of solidarity and brotherhood seem to decrease as the results of the low character building.

This point may speak to that religious educational institutions, including madrasa, seem to have bigger responsibility to encounter this issue. Furchan (2004: 25) urges that the good quality of education in religious institutes (madrasa) yields a generation that is expected to be able to portray himself as the leader of the people, communities, and nation. Otherwise, once they are treated in lower educational quality in madrasa, it is deemed to erode their social roles.

Indeed, lots of madrasas are not all in excellent condition because they only get very minimum assistance from the government. It can be noticed that almost in every region, there is a madrasa that is capable of competing with public schools. Such religious school usually relies on good management in its development so as to be well-mapped and integrated within national education systems (Marshall, 2018: 185). It shows the well-run management of madrasa tends to produce quality educational improvement situated in this Islamic educational institution.

This study urges the development and academic achievement has been considered successful since four years ago performed at one of public primary madrasas in Sleman, Yogyakarta, Indonesia. This madrasa is accredited A by the national accreditation agency. Additionally, the principal of this madrasa is appointed as a national exemplary teacher by the Ministry of Religious Affairs clearly demonstrating that the madrasa has outstanding managerial standards of quality assurance. The present study, therefore, tries to explore the implementation of educational quality assurance at

this government-funded madrasa and to highlight the model of quality assurance management as well as the elaboration of its implementation in this madrasa.

## **EDUCATIONAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN AN INDONESIAN MADRASA**

### **Quality Assurance in Character Building**

Concerning character building, the public primary madrasa has set quality objectives for the shaping of character for each student. Such a matter has been a special concern for the stakeholders of this madrasa, considering today's occurring phenomena. Good character cultivation and habituation from an early age is expected that the good characters are embedded by each student, which, in turn, become a culture. The enactment of this policy is carried out systemically, meaning that there are interrelations among the fields supporting each other (Interview with the principal, August 2018). This synergy is depicted through offering the prayers by their own awareness, obedient to parents, discipline, self-confidence, good social behavior, reading enthusiasm, and clean culture, Qur'an recitation in *tartil*, having the ability to read well, and good communication skill.

Additionally, the quality assurance in character building is also demonstrated through promoting the concept of children-friendly school (CFS). Since 2015, Sleman regency has taken the initiative to develop schools into an environment that is friendlier to the students and all school employees. The initiative was strengthened by a joint commitment in the form of regulation of policies for developing children-friendly schools through the Regent Decree No. 19/2016. There are now 52 schools that have been initiated as children-friendly schools.

Related to the quality assurance, the concept of CFS at the madrasa is defined as a school that is safe, clean, healthy, caring, environmentally cultured, able to guarantee, fulfill, and respect children's rights and protect children from violence, discrimination, and other mistreatment and support children's participation, especially in planning, policy, learning, supervision, and complaints mechanism related to the fulfillment of children's rights and protection in education.

The CFS does not mean constructing a whole new school. It refers to setting a comfortable school for children, ensuring the fulfillment of the rights and the protection of the children, as a second home for children after their own home (Interview with the

principal, August 2018). The CFS components in this public madrasa involve first, non-discrimination: guaranteeing all students to get their rights regardless the differences in their religion, culture, gender, and socioeconomic status. Second, the best interests for the children can be noticed when making decisions, managers and educators always see the best interests for the children as the main consideration. Third, right to life, survival and growth mean creating an educational environment that guarantees the right to live and grow respecting the dignity of the children holistically and in integrative manners. Fourth, appreciation to the children's opinions is highlighted through listening and appreciating every child's opinion and taking it seriously. Next, good management copes with ensuring transparency, accountability, participation, information disclosure and rule of law in the school/madrasa. Sixth, anti-violence: Refusing any behavior/actions that cause damage both physically, psychologically, sexually, financially and spiritually. Lastly, positive discipline: Prioritizing the application of non-violent discipline through communication, teaching them responsibility and respect in their interaction with the environment.

The launching of CFS at this madrasa begins with socialization carried out to all school members (students, teachers, academic staff, school/madrasa committee, and parents' associations). The socialization materials function to building awareness of the importance of fulfilling children's rights and protection including Children Protection Laws, the regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture regarding the prevention and handling of violence in education units, then continued with the material of Sleman regency's policy on CFS, which can be done in collaboration with competent relevant agencies. This socialization aims to increase the understanding of all madrasa members about the importance of fulfilling the rights and protection of children. Secondly, it functions to build the commitment of all stakeholders about the importance of organizing CFS as a need shared by all parties.

In addition, in the socializing pattern, the relationship between the teacher and students is considered good. Obviously, teachers' profile can be seen from the way they deal with the students. Teachers as students' parents and friends should be able to demonstrate fair behavior to all students regardless of their social status or physical condition, both normal and special students, and are able to respect the rights of the

students. Compassion is given to all students, as well as applying the prevailing religious and cultural norms.

It is crystal clear to state that communication between teacher and students occurring in teaching and learning activities should be communicative. The indicator that a student has chosen the best school for him/her is how far he/she feels safe and comfortable being in that school. Therefore, the teaching and learning process should be packaged in such a way that the students feel enjoy taking part in the lesson, without any anxiety and fear. Besides, the learning methods should encourage students to be more creative. Not to mention, CFS emphasizes more on child-centered activities. It is supported by the teacher playing a role as a friend who is willing to help with all obstacles and difficulties the students face.

## **Quality Assurance in Madrasa's Educational Management**

### ***Planning***

The present study promotes that the primary madrasa located in Yogyakarta has a strategic development plan which is derived from the vision and mission of the institution, also has been agreed upon by all school members and related parties. The strategic plan is derived into three planning stages. The first stage is long-term planning, covering a span of between four and five years. The second stage is medium-term planning that has a span of two to three years. This long-term and medium-term plans is better known as the madrasa work plan (MWP).

The basics used to develop MWP are, among others, the vision and mission of the foundation, the vision and mission of the school, the condition of the school, the expectations of stakeholders, the demands of knowledge development, and challenges of the society. As a result, in the next four years, the existence of this madrasa is more capable to adjust the assessment of the needs and graduate users. Furthermore, the principles used in the development of MWP are principles of effective, efficient, accountable and democratic management. The scope prepared in the work plan includes students, curriculum and learning activities, teachers and education staff, facilities and infrastructure, finance, culture and milieu of the school, community participation, and partnership.

The short-term planning, which only takes one year, is better known as the annual work plan (AWP). This plan is derived from this work plan, in more detailed and operational forms. The preparation of the AWP is led by the principal and all teachers and education staff. The flow of the preparation of this annual work plan is “bottom-up”, meaning that each commission prepares work programs coordinated by the head of the field. The head of the field is assigned with discussing the AWP prepared before the convention in the institution level. The annual work plan covers academic, student, religious, and secretarial fields.

The result of the annual work plan that was agreed upon by the field level is further discussed or reviewed at the school level and synchronized with other fields. This is intended to prevent overlapping activities between one field and another, also to learn whether or not the program has appropriate values and is right on the target to show good managerial implications (Sfakianaki, 2019: 10). The meeting to produce the AWP was led by the principal of the school. After this work plan draft was agreed upon by all heads of fields, also approved in the plenary meeting, the draft becomes an annual activity plan (Interview with the Principal, September 2018).

When observed from the flow of the preparation and the discussion of the AWP, the primary madrasa has implemented the right management principles. Work programs are compiled based on the needs of each field; the programs are open, accountable, measurable and democratic. In this case, the principle only acts as a manager who is always acting as an agent of “*ing ngarso sung tulodo, tut wuri handayani dan ing madya mangun karso*” (providing examples at the front, raising spirit from the middle, and encouraging from behind). Considering this process, it can certainly be predicted that the organization will be able to run smoothly because the program is a manifestation of the aspirations of all related elements.

### ***The Organization Mechanism***

Every year, the madrasa always sets the implementation of the MWP and AWP in accordance with the existing formations and competencies. In the 2018/2019 school year, the structure of the organization is principal, quality management representative, heads of fields/divisions, staff of the heads of fields, classroom coordinators, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, person in charge of the library, person in charge of the

laboratory, health nurse, security coordinator, cleaning service coordinator, drivers of the school. In order for the organization to run effectively and efficiently, the head of the madrasa is assisted by a Quality Management Representative and four heads of fields.

### ***Internal and External Audit***

One of the requirements for an institution or an organization to have quality is that it always carries out internal and external audits. This is intended to achieve the principles of accountability and transparency in realizing each activity. These audits need to be done within the framework of periodic evaluations of all activities so that there is an opportunity for improvement when an activity is found less effective and efficient.

The internal audit at this primary madrasa was carried out by a team of independent auditors led by a quality management representative with members appointed by the principal and school committee. All auditors have fulfilled the requirements, because they already have an auditor certificate. The internal audit conducted in this madrasa is well planned and programmed. At the latest, there will be an internal audit in four months. Meanwhile, the external audit is conducted by the Inspectorate General of Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs and the Development Finance Comptroller (BPKP) to evaluate the programs that have been carried out by the school.

### ***The Performance Assessment of the Teachers and Academic Staffs***

To ensure that the performance of the teachers and academic staff always optimal, this madrasa conducts performance assessment on a regular basis in June and December. The objectives of the assessment include discipline, task accomplishment, cooperation, creativity, loyalty, and personality. The results of the performance assessment become the basis for the school in determining promotion or degradation, rank and class promotion, salary raise, and reward.

The findings illustrate that the mechanism of educational quality assurance on primary education is implemented with the approach of the PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Action) cycle on the organization of the educational process. It agrees Larina's (2015:

11) viewpoint elaborating that firstly, Plan is the existence of a quality planning related to planning, including the determination of the quality policy, quality objective assignment along with indicators of achievements, as well as the determination of the procedures for the achievement of the objective of quality. Secondly, Do is the implementation of what has been planned to ensure the quality of education; the whole educational process, including the educational administration is carried out in accordance with the operational standards. Thirdly, Check means to do the monitoring, inspection, measurement and evaluation of the implementation and results including the internal quality audit. Finally, Action means the follow-up action towards the evaluation of the improvement plan and reporting the implementation of educational programs. While to implement quality programs, it is important to provide some strong bases, namely: a commitment to change, clear understanding about the existing conditions, clear vision towards the future, and clear plan (Sukmadinata, 2009: 8-9).

The PDCA cycle should deem some principles of educational enhancement that have the role as the base in applying educational quality programs. It is in accordance with Micić, Micić, & Blagojević (2013: 242) pinpointing that first, educational quality improvement requires professional leadership in the field of education. Second, difficulties encountered by the educational professions are their incapability to deal with the lack of a 'system failure' that prevents them from the development or implementation of new processes or ways to improve the educational quality. Third, the increase in educational quality should do some steps. The educational professions should help students in developing the skills needed to compete in a globalized world. Fourth, the educational quality can be improved if the administrators, teachers, staff, supervisors and the government develop an attitude concerning on leadership, team work, cooperation, accountability, and recognition. Next, the key of educational quality improvement is a commitment to change. Finally, one of the key components in the quality program is a measurement system (Sukmadinata, 2009: 11).

## **Quality Assurance in Teaching and Learning Processes**

### ***Learning Objectives***

One of the most important aspects of learning is the learning objectives. These objectives are derivatives from educational goals that are more detailed and more

measurable. This aspect must be understood by the teachers before they carry out learning. After being well understood, students must also understand what the objectives of each learning are. Therefore, the teachers must notify all students what the goal of a lesson is. This is very important because if students know the purpose of learning, they will be motivated to master the material presented by the teacher.

Furthermore, it can be proposed that the purpose of learning is a 'locomotive' that will affect the entire set of carriages that it drives. The objective will determine what material should be taught, how it should be delivered, in what way it is delivered, what media can be effective in achieving the objectives, and how to measure the achievement of the learning objectives.

The learning objectives that are explained in the lesson plans cover the details of the overall curriculum. In this case, the madrasa applies two curricula together. The first one is the 2013 Curriculum that is in accordance with the regulation of Minister of Education and Culture No. 54, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, and 71. The second one is the *madrasah ibtidaiyah* curriculum which is in accordance with the regulations of the Minister of Religion No. 165/2014. The third is the local curriculum prepared by the school itself. The last-mentioned curriculum is useful to accommodate expectations from the foundation as a special feature as well as to improve the competence of the students (Interview with the principal, 12 September 2018).

### ***Teaching Staff***

No matter how well the curriculum is prepared if the implementation of the curriculum (teacher) does not have adequate competence, then the goal of education will not be achieved optimally. Therefore, this primary madrasa always considers the educational backgrounds and competencies in when hiring teachers. To ensure that the classes carried out by the teachers are effective and efficient, they are required to make a complete lesson plan. According to the principal, he always encourage the teachers to compile the syllabus and lesson plan when entering a new semester (Interview with the principal, 12 September 2018). Given the heterogeneity of the teachers' educational backgrounds, the madrasa often invites experts in learning design to constantly update the teacher's understanding in issues relating to learning, learning strategies, and learning evaluation.

### ***Approaches and Strategies in Learning***

One of the determinants of learning successfulness is the approach. When a teacher is not right in using the learning approach, it can predictably affect the learning outcomes. Learning approaches depend so much on the learning objectives and the character of the teaching materials. According to the head of academic affairs, there are five approaches adopted by the teacher, namely: emotional, experience, rational, functional, and habituation approaches. All learning approaches lead to the scientific approach as an approach to the 2013 Curriculum. This is strengthened by the fact got by the researchers when observing a teacher during a class session.

One of the most prominent approaches is the habituation approach. This approach is more focused on shaping Islamic character, as stated in the vision of this madrasa as a school that is “*Selalu Berprestasi (Always Achieving)*”. Every day, the teachers come to the school at 6:15 o'clock or fifteen minutes before classes begin. All teachers stand in front of the classroom gate to shake hands with all students. The same condition is done when students are returning home. Thus, the teachers are the earliest to come and the latest to go home. In the student affairs program, it is known by “welcoming and farewell”.

The habituation approach in order to shape character is the habituation of *dhuhur* congregational prayers, *ashar* prayer, *dhuha* prayer, *tadarrus*, Qur'an *tahsin* and *tartil* programs, public speaking competitions, writing competitions, and *khalaqoh* (religious study cycle). This cultivation is included in the quality assurance in the field of character building. With this habituation, students are expected to have a strong commitment to act them in their daily life.

By using the approach as mentioned above, the learning strategy applied by the teacher is called PAIKEM (Active, Innovative, and Creative Learning) strategy or joyful learning. In this approach, students are required to be physically and psychologically active while the teacher is only a facilitator. From the observations done by the researcher in several classes during a class session, the teacher has used active learning strategies, although some are still using traditional strategies but the percentage is small. This is undoubtedly because all teachers in this madrasa have received workshop on active learning called “Pekerti workshops”.

Activities outside the curriculum that are intended to help achieve learning outcomes are extracurricular. Another goal of this activity is a means for the students to express their talents and interests. Extracurricular activities in this madrasa are English club, *Qiroatul Qur'an*, tambourines, public speaking, band, vocal, choir, drum band, painting, *Jarimatika*, robotics, karate, football, table tennis, badminton, athletics, scouts, junior doctors, and computers (Interview with the head of student affairs).

### ***Learning Evaluation***

Learning evaluation is a tool to find out to what extent the completeness of the learning material that has been mastered by the students. Besides that, evaluation also serves as a platform to determine what kind of improvements need to be done. There are two kinds of learning evaluations conducted in this public madrasa, namely: written and oral evaluations in the form of final exams, midterm exams, and daily and block exercise, as well as non-test exams in the form of observations using portfolio and performance.

These findings enact that educational quality assurance is the process of the determination and fulfillment of the quality standards in consistent and sustainable approach so that the stakeholders gain satisfaction toward the quality. It confirms Praraksa, Sroinam, Inthusamith, Pawarinyanon (2015: 1587) stating that a quality assurance is all over the important systematic plan of action to provide the confidence that is used to satisfy the needs of a particular quality. Meanwhile, quality assurance is an activity to provide evidence to establish confidence so that the quality can function properly (Bieker, 2014: 283). It indicates that in the internal quality assurance by educational unit, the unit of educational management at elementary and secondary levels applies school-based management, namely: independence, partnership, participation, openness, and accountability.

Additionally, in the Government Regulation No. 19/2005 Article 65, it is stipulated that educational unit develops vision-mission and performance evaluation, whereas, in the article 91, it is a compulsory for educational unit to perform educational quality assurance to meet or fulfill national educational standards. In short, the implementation of a system of quality assurance in education covers series of process/stages in the cyclic model starting from (1) data collection, (2) data analysis, (3)

the reporting/mapping, (4) preparation of recommendations, and (5) the efforts of the recommendation implementation in the form of a program to improve educational quality.

Schools need to form a team of school developer that consists of various elements of stakeholders i.e., principals, superintendents, teachers, school committee, parents, and other representatives of community groups who are appropriate to be included because of high concern on the school. In implementation of quality assurance educational system, the supervisor that served as school trustees should also be involved in the school developer team, as the representative of the government.

### **Quality Development of the Teachers and Academic Staffs**

A credible institution always fosters its employees, so that they could do their best in their tasks. It also functions to improve, maintain and develop the performance of the teachers and academic staff. The development of employees begins since the time of recruitment. This recruitment is, of course, based on the school's activity plans. The addition of employee is based on institutional development such as the addition of new units or teachers (Sudarwan, 2015). The conditions for holding recruitment are: the analysis of the needed works in education, job description or position description that contains name of the position, duties and responsibilities, and acceptance and employment specification which includes educational qualifications, experience, skills and competencies.

Once the applicants have done all selection tests and are stated to have passed them, the placement is also gradual. For the initial stage, the candidates are asked to teach grade III and IV, if they show good achievements, then they will be placed in another class according to their expertise, they teach until at least 24 hours per week. The training and development conducted in this madrasa has always been well planned and conducted periodically through various trainings, workshops and others. Periodic trainings, as the head of the academic affairs said, are regular; development meetings, career development, and teacher welfare. It depicts that professional learning community in madrasa yields beneficial impacts on a meaningful learning atmosphere (Shierly, Tobia, & Leithwood, 2012: 16).

This result is also essential to note that the purpose of quality assurance activities is very important, for both internal and external organization of the party. This is in line with Maroun (2019: 18) declaring that educational quality assurance can be conducted through continuously assisting the improvement and the development through sustainable practices and innovation, facilitating the assistance, regarding the loan of money, facilities, or other helps from powerful institutions that can be trusted, providing information on the community in accordance with the targets and time on a consistent basis, and where possible, comparing the standards that have been achieved with the competitors' standards, and assuring that the program runs well without anything that might hinder the program. It suggests that the purpose of quality assurance is to satisfy the various parties concerned on it, so that it can successfully achieve their respective goals. Quality assurance is the combination of the products and services quality of an organization or company (Sallis, 2006). Quality assurance mechanisms used should also be able to stop the changes when the change is considered as a decline or a slowdown.

With regard to quality assurance, Holm, Sammalisto, & Vuorisalo (2015: 532) explain that the development of educational quality assurance activities is not a quality control or inspection. Although the program of quality assurance includes quality control and inspection, those two activities are parts of a commitment to overall quality. Moreover, quality assurance is not the responsibility of the planning section. In other words, the department of quality assurance is not a decision of planning or engineering fields, but it requires people who can take responsibility in decision-making that are needed in planning. This portrays the crucial role of madrasa principals to perform authentic leadership for designing and managing great environment in an educational setting (Komariah & Kurniady, 2017: 308).

## **CONCLUSION**

The current study promotes that the implementation stages of education quality management at a public primary madrasa in Yogyakarta, Indonesia starts from planning, organizing, mobilizing, supervising, developing, and evaluating. The implementation of this phase uses bottom-up, transparent, and accountable system, accompanied by a clear job description in each position so that it provides optimal educational services.

Meanwhile, the quality assurance in this madrasa emphasizes character building, internal audit, teaching and learning processes, and quality development of the teacher and academic staff. In accordance to the quality assurance, the primary madrasa proposes the concept of 'children-friendly school', which aims to set a comfortable learning environment for the children.

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